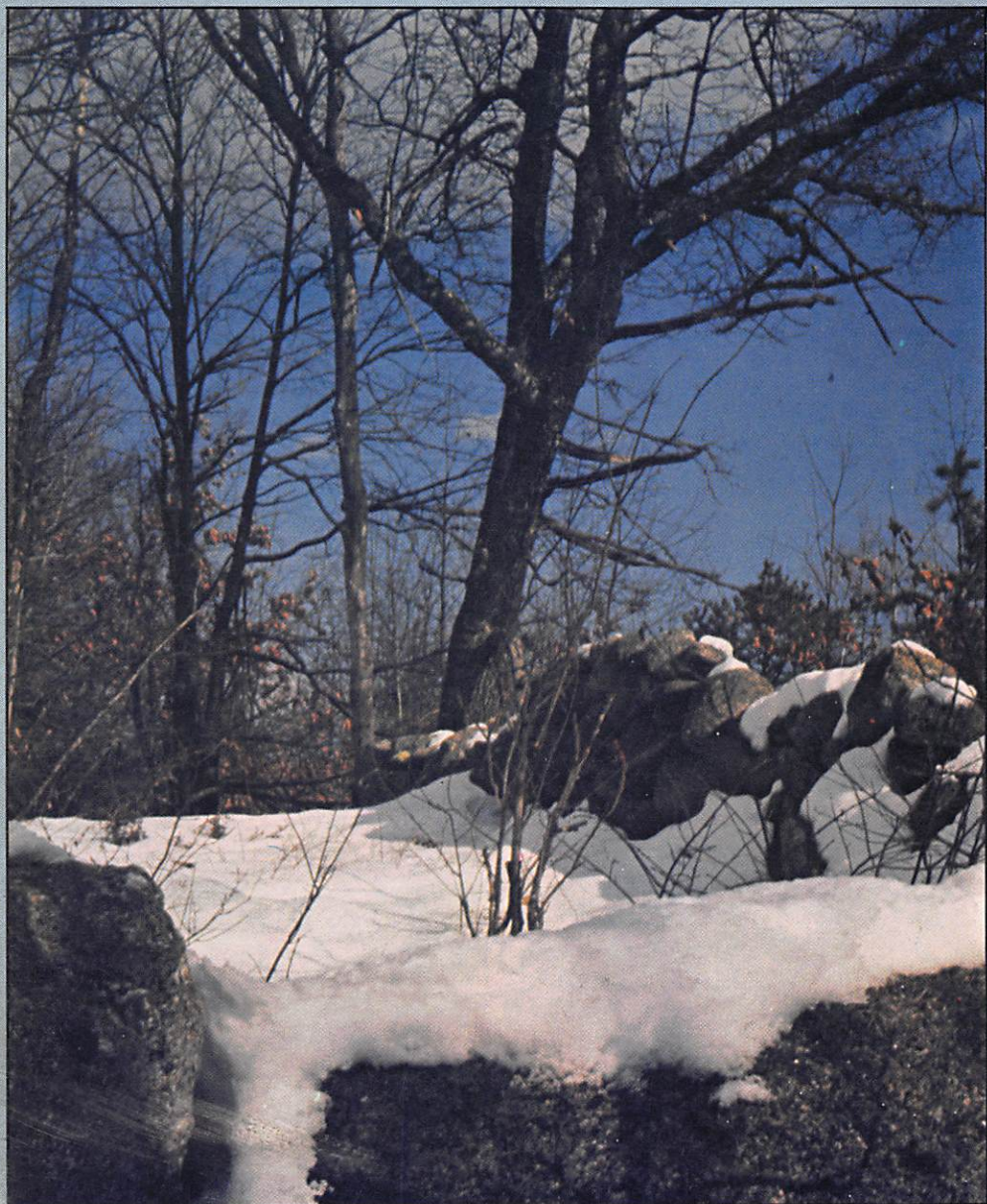


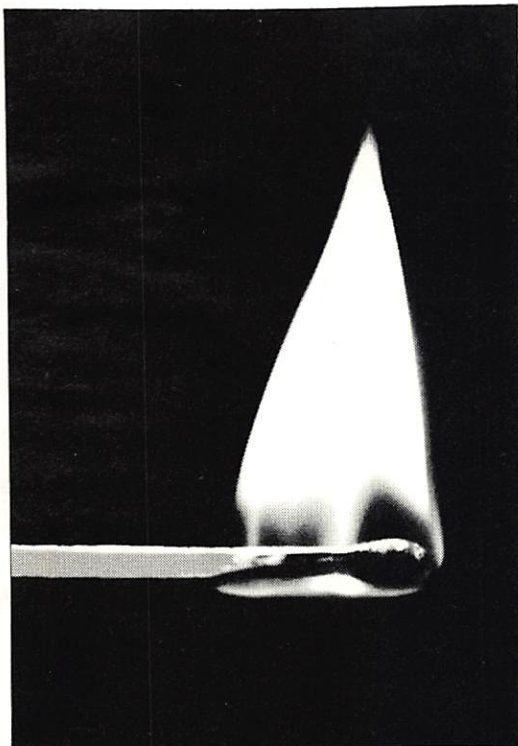
Bitter Sweet ^{75¢}

February, 1978 *The Magazine of Maine's Hills & Lakes Region* Vol. 1 No. 4



Local Artists:

**V. Akers, An Old Master
Jean Randall, A New Vision**



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~ Bert.

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So drop in today ~ Peter.

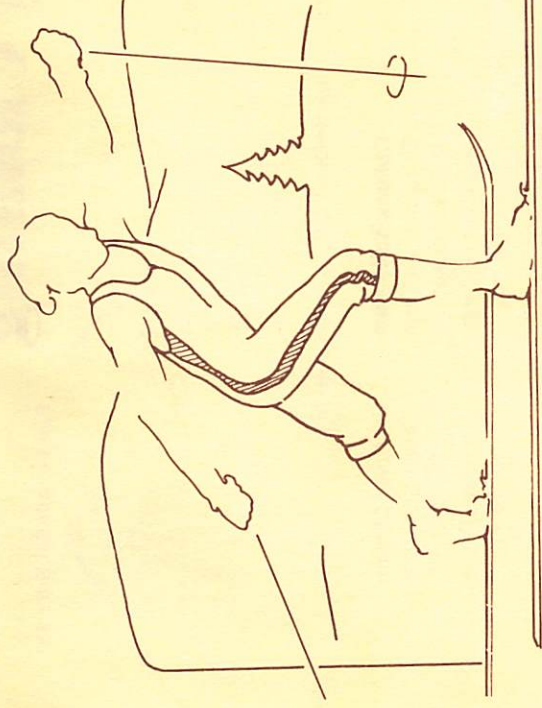


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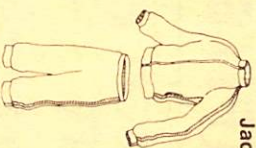
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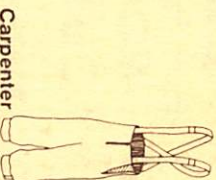
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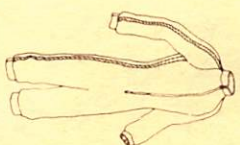


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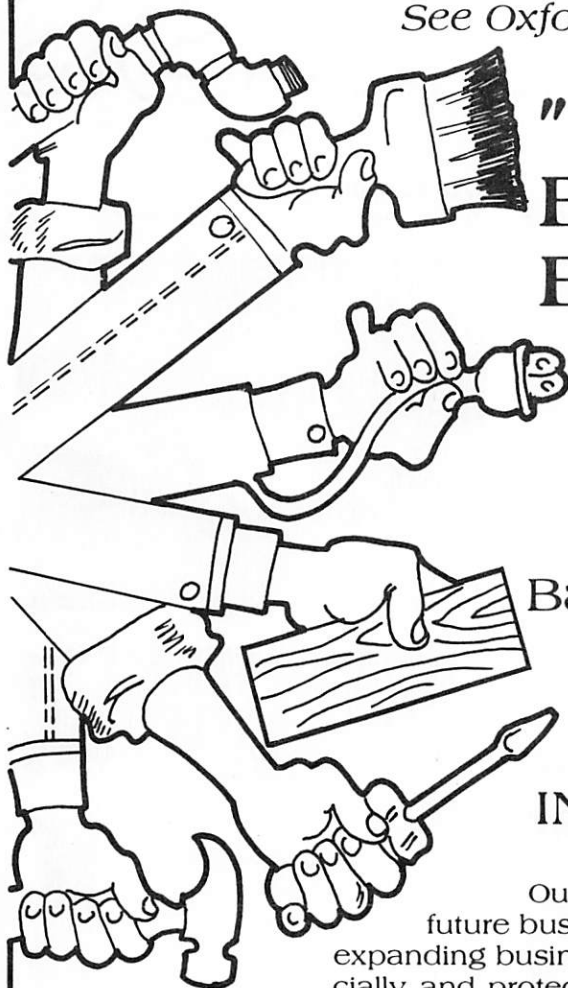
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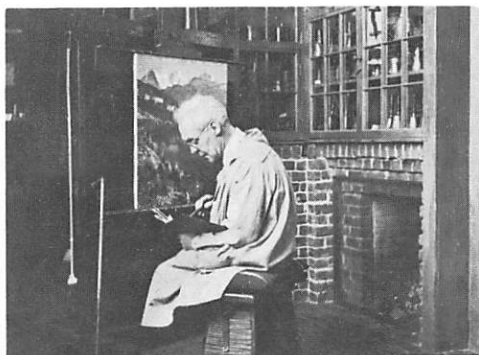
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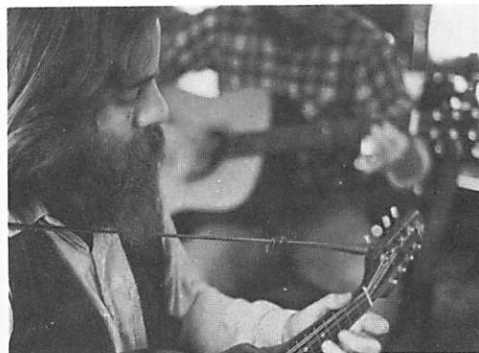
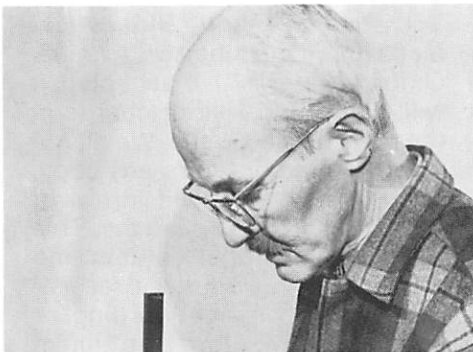
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CREDITS

Illustrations: Page 20, Paula McKenney; Pages 28-29, 42, Duncan Slade; Pages 54, 56, Charles Hutchinson; Photos: Page 50, Bill Haynes; Page 19, Mark Vogler; Page 40, Ben Saltzman; Pages 10, 12, Thom Barrett; Pages 7, 8, 48, 51, 52, Sandy Wilhelm.

Cover Photo: Locke Mills' Wall by D. Gilpatrick

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BitterSweet

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SUNDAY RIVER SKI AREA, Box 601, Bethel, Maine / 824-2187



While making the rounds with the January batch of **BitterSweets**, someone stopped me at The Brass Buckle in Bethel and offered two ideas for magazine stories.

Both suggested subjects were local residents — one an elderly retired school teacher, whose proficiency at everything from quilting to cooking had awed the speaker; the second, an enterprising female entrepreneur whose clever handmade toys were taking the area by storm.

That kind of encounter is becoming more and more the rule these days — a fact which pleases me, not only because it makes for good magazine reading, but also because it is evidence that folks are beginning to take on the magazine as their own. It's what we'd hoped all along would happen.

So, you'll be seeing **BitterSweet** increasingly livened by local personalities in the months ahead.

In this issue, for instance, Waterford gunsman, scientist and self-proclaimed hermit, Bob Horton, talks (somewhat reluctantly) with reporter Cathy Flynn (pg. 16).

Otisfield artist Jean Randall, whose work has been exhibited locally to widespread acclaim, shares her approaches to art with friend and neighbor Pat Gorrie (pg. 10).

This month's Reader's Room contributor, Jerry Genesio, tells a heartening tale of the people of Sweden, Maine, who *en masse* managed to win a development war with Central Maine Power Company (pg. 18).

Not all the personalities are contemporaries. Norway native-son artist, Vivian Akers, whose colorful life ended in 1966, is recalled by his milkman, Harry Walker, in a piece arguing a place for the artist among the old masters (pg. 11).

Whether of past or present, the reading adds up to a very personal rendering of an area whose abundant attributes in natural resources are surpassed only by its *human* resources.

Sandy Wilhelm



South Paris' King Hill

BitterSweet

Notes:



Stanley Howe at the head of Bethel's Broad Street

HISTORIC LISTING

The recent listing of the Broad Street section of downtown Bethel on the National Register of Historic Places — the official list of those cultural resources deemed worthy of national preservation — is but the first step toward total protection of the area, according to Moses Mason House curator Stanley Howe.

"We're all very conscious of the fact that anything could happen here at any time," says Howe of what he terms the town's "best

street," an assortment of stately homes and businesses lining the town common at the head of Main Street.

Howe, who has been hard at work to have the area dubbed an historic district since taking over his curator duties four years ago, says he worries most about the possibility of fire destroying one of the showplaces and freeing up property for erection of an "inappropriate" structure. The sterile brick fire house built in 1965 not far from the

expansive Bethel Inn stands as a vivid reminder of how close the area has already come to destroying its harmonious blend of architectural styles, Howe says.

"The station's not as good as it might have been, but then it's not as bad as it could have been," shrugs Howe of the building's common neo-colonial design.

Howe remembers that it was the prospect of the sale of both the Bethel Inn and the National Training Laboratory building, once home to the world-renowned Gehring Institute, which originally spurred interest in an historic district declaration.

"We felt there was a lot of history here that ought to be saved," he says.

After a year spent gathering information on the area and preparing a formal application to the Maine Historical Preservation Committee, the street was formally designated a federal historic district by the Department of the Interior's National Parks Service.

But, all the title really means, according to Howe, is that federal grants for preservation work will now be made available to private property owners living in the district and any federally funded project which might have an adverse effect on the area will be subject to a formal review. The designation does nothing to prevent what Howe describes as \$30,000 "ticky-tackies" from springing up along the street; nor does it stop any owner of property from painting his or her house purple, should he feel so inclined.

"Those are the kind of things that will have to be handled through local zoning," says Howe, who also serves as a town selectman.

A zoning ordinance has already been approved once and later ditched by Bethel voters. But, Howe says he is hopeful that widespread interest generated in the Broad Street section will spur townspeople to approve some type of nitty-gritty protective ruling for the area which will once-and-for-all guard against anything which could ruin its atmosphere and undermine its historic value.

"I'm not resting until the town okays some form of zoning," says Howe, a Bethel native who left long enough to earn recent advanced degrees in Canadian-American relations and American History at the University of Maine.

Among the credits claimed by Broad

Street is an unusually wide range of architectural styles reminiscent of the mid-1800's, including the Federal design of the Moses Mason House, built in 1813 and the oldest structure on the street; the Federal-Greek Revival style of the Hastings Homestead, where the village blacksmith and treasurer of Gould Academy once lived; the Shingle style of Wright Cottage, summer home to Gould benefactor William Bingham II; and the Queen Anne style of Herrick House, once the site of the town's Methodist Parsonage.

Two U. S. Congressmen and a Maine Supreme Court Justice once lived along the street and some of New England's most wealthy and scholarly elite were drawn to the area during the early 1900's as patients at the renowned Gehring Clinic, which treated a variety of nervous disorders.

EAST STONEHAM HAUNT

"I can keep your wastebasket full with all my material," wrote 73-year-old Inez Farrington from her Ledgeview Nursing Home residence in West Paris a few months back.

"If I send anything worth printing, I will get it typed, for my writing is very bad now," she continued. "I have articles all written on about any subject, including some murders. They are all true."

Among the dozen-or-so poems, letters and articles which followed was an intriguing description of life in her "haunted house" in East Stoneham:

"Many people report seeing ghosts and living in a house where strange things happen. They get frightened and move out of the house, leaving the ghost to have its own way.

"We lived in a large house, which was home to my father, mother, sister, a grandmother and a grandfather. I was a young bride and happily married, living with my family until we found a house.

"We were a noisy, happy family and life was great when suddenly one day there was a loud series of knocks under the pantry floor. We did not pay much attention to the racket until it went on for many days.

"We all had our own opinion as to what it was. We decided there must be an animal making its home there. Dad and Mother were inclined to pay no attention to it but

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LOCAL ARTISTS

Jean Randall:

A New Vision

by Pat White Gorrie

Otisfield artist Jean Randall is out to open students' eyes and hearts to art as a celebration of its Source.

Entering Jean Randall's world is like stepping into a Jean Renoir movie, the dreamy, creamy colors of house and heroine caught in shafts of sunlight and shot with a soft-focus lens.

Her art is everywhere, an extension of herself, vibrating at the same rate.

"I'm part of the backdrop," she says, and it is true, for it's impossible to find the line where Jean Randall ends and her art begins. She has blended all the individual components of her home, garden and woods into a soothing, harmonious whole in which she herself is perfectly integrated.

Her mediums are her message and her message springs from her deepest convictions:

"Everything that I do is a statement of faith, a form of prayer. I celebrate Life, God, Mother Earth every time I pick up a piece of macrame string or crochet wool, or a block of wood and a chisel, or a paint brush dabbed with Chinese ink. It wasn't until I stopped floundering in my faith and realized that I really did have strong religious feelings that I stopped floundering in my art. After all, what is the point of art, if not to celebrate its Source?



Jean Randall

It is this kind of philosophy that gentle-eyed Jean spoons out to students, along with lessons in technique and a contagious joy about what she is doing.

"Everyone is an artist, if he is totally absorbed in what he is doing, whether it be baking a loaf of bread or planting a garden or telling a story to a child. I try to convey to the children and adults I teach that if they care about what they are doing and are doing it

V. Akers:

An Old Master

by Harry Walker



V. Akers

A retired Norway dairy farmer states a strong case for adding the name of Vivian Akers to the list of old masters.

He was one of the kindest of men. And he was as generous as he was kind. His name was Vivian Milner Akers, and he was one of Maine's finest artists.

Vivian Akers was born in Norway on December 14, 1886, the son of Charles and Effie Milner Akers. He enjoyed a normal healthy boyhood, growing up in an interesting era that saw the horse and buggy as the chief form of transportation, street cars on Norway's main street and steamers on Lake Pennesseewassee.

The earliest hint Akers gave that he might become an artist came at about the age of six. While waiting quietly one afternoon for his father to get through work in the old shoe shop, the boy was given a box of crayons by a lady who was somewhat of an artist herself. Young Vivian surprised the kind lady by drawing some creditable pictures on cardboard.

Akers attended the Norway schools for several years, then transferred to Hebron Academy, where he was on the staff of the student literary publication, *Hebron Semester*, for which he designed and drew the cover logo. He graduated from the academy in 1908.

Convinced by this time that his future was in the world of art, Vivian moved to New York City and enrolled in the Art Students League. While taking art instruction, he helped pay his way by working for a newspaper, *The New York World*.

After a rewarding stay in the big city, Akers returned to Norway and set himself up in a studio just off Pleasant Street, over the hill. There he worked diligently at his easel, applying what skills he had acquired to many landscapes.

page 14



Unfinished Portrait

with love and the deepest attention, it is Art. They must feel free to express what is inside them, with no feeling of competition.

"In Casco recently, I taught a workshop for first, second and third graders in which they made collages entitled, *My Song*. I wanted to make the point to them that the song that sprang from each of them and was expressed on paper was just as valid a piece of art as anything I, their teacher, was doing.

"I feel almost a missionary zeal about getting people to realize that artists are not a breed apart. The Master Artist is God and His seed is in all of us. Everyone should let loose the art in himself and experiment with expressing it in many different forms.

"Why be locked in to a particular medium? I could not possibly just stick to, say, oils and acrylics. Why limit yourself? Get into textures, shapes, shades, colors, raw materials."

Jean's blue eyes sparkle with intensity and her hands gesture in pantomime as she makes her point.

"I get high from the feel of things. I find utterly fascinating such diverse things as the roughness of a black walnut shell or the smoothness of a piece of marble. And the beauty in the grain and knots and bark of the various woods just goes on and on. Maybe it's a kind of kinetic sensuality I've developed, but actually we should use all our senses more. There is so much to see, to touch, to smell.

"As a teacher, I have no desire to make my pupils carbon copies of myself, but I do try to open their eyes and hearts. Artistically I want them to be free to find their own forte, so I expose them to everything from print-making to the potter's wheel. They draw, paint, carve, mold, even make their own dyes. Maybe by next summer I'll be able to

add silk screening to the list."

The artist's drive and energy spring, no doubt, from her enthusiasm and sense of purpose, but she also credits megavitamins, lack of any white sugar consumption, and plenty of home-grown herbs and vegetables from her rock-lined garden.

"I'm as much in love with gardening as anything else I do. I love to get up in the morning," she says.

Jean does seem to run through her days like an excited child, as if there were a surprise waiting behind every bush.

"I never know what I'll see when I open my door. Maybe it'll be a chickadee or a pine branch, or a day like one last summer, straight out of a Japanese water color, all pink and grey. And a hummingbird was in the phlox."

Words tumble over each other as she describes her reactions to sights that most people would not even notice.

"Even fog overwhelms me. It's like velvet. Like the world being wrapped in gauze. And when it lifts, ah! It's Brigadoon."

The door through which Jean views her world with that higher vision is a door she hand-carved herself in an intricate floral design. When she can steal time from her other projects she will add above it the legend, "Make a joyful noise..."

"I feel I was newly born when I moved to Maine and everything I do reflects my love affair with this place. All the elemental differences between man and woman seem to exist here. The masculine rocks as opposed to the feminine wildflowers and grasses brushing up against them; the stark, jagged outline of a tree in sharp relief against a background of rounded hills; that sort of thing."

"One reason I love doing woodcuts is that it allows me to express both delicacy and ruggedness. Masculinity and femininity should complement one another, not compete, in nature and art as well as in human relationships."

In between giving one-woman shows and exhibiting prints in galleries up and down the New England coast, Jean teaches in her home ("... the door is always open") as well as in schools; has several portraits-in-progress of local residents; and has begun making (from local clay and hand-mixed glazes) all her dishes and mugs as well as the tiles that will adorn her kitchen walls. She is also drawing up architectural plans for two

houses she is designing for out-of-staters.

Her own house, on Forrest Edwards Road in Otisfield, is her best advertisement. Lloyd Grover was the local builder who brought her plans and dreams to fruition and she wants his signature on her door as a sort of modern-day "amity button," symbolic of the fine workmanship he and his crew put into it.

"I was there every day, breathing down their necks, supervising every detail from the laying of the floorboards to the exact slant of my roof. When Lloyd saw that I really did understand spatial relationships he began to trust my judgement and then we both were able to relax and enjoy the whole exciting experience of watching the house take form."

Eventually she will have a workroom and studio on the second floor with skylights built into the roof. But in the meantime, Jean works all over the downstairs and it is natural to see woodchips by her coffee cup on the dining room table, a half-done braided rug in front of her stove, and the image of a dark-haired girl in a red blouse gazing at you from an easel beside the potted rosemary and the huge basket of mixed wools in front of the long windows.

The house looks onto a Rousseau-like woods which will create a "vista for the soul," once Jean finishes denuding the tall pines of their dead branches. She grows artistically from physical things like cutting wood and digging in her garden.

"The closer I get to the earth and the basic elements of life, the more in touch I am with the elemental things within myself, my own essence. I feel such a oneness with Nature now and I want others to feel that way, too."

"The arts are so very necessary to Man; such a joyous way to acknowledge that we love our earth, that we are glad of the gift of life. Transferring an experience into an art form enables you to relive it. If you are free artistically you can find a way to capture a walk on a dusty country road, or a day at the seashore with its salty smells, the texture of barnacles, the damp sand between your toes, the sound of the surf in your ears."

Visit with Jean Randall and you'll find that art isn't what she does; it's what she is.

Gorrie is a freelance journalist living in Otisfield.



... Akers

He was bolstered by the moral support of his parents and his sister, Ruth. But few paintings sold.

Around 1914 he purchased the Merrill Photographic Studio at the corner of Main and Deering streets in Norway. Having a keen interest in photography, it was easy for Vivian to combine this profession with that of painting. The studio was moved back several rods from Main Street, then later moved again to allow for a walk and a small lawn between the building and Deering Street.

When he was well-settled in business, Vivian decided to get married. His bride was Edith Verrill, daughter of Professor Addison E. Verrill, a native of Greenwood, and the first professor of zoology at Yale University.

Eager to broaden his knowledge of painting, Akers studied under John J. Enneking, a famous landscape artist, and under Douglas Volk, widely known for his portraits of Abraham Lincoln. Enneking's works were bright in color and impressionistic, while Volk's landscapes were of more somber tones. The influence of both artists is evident in much of Akers' output of this period, during the nineteen-twenties.

By 1930, Akers' oil paintings had become good enough to win considerable acclaim, and he was invited to exhibit his art in various shows. In 1936, a portrait of Betty Joslin, a local girl, holding a Siamese cat belonging to Akers on her lap was chosen to be exhibited at the National Academy of Design in New York City. This was a high honor and it gave his morale a welcome lift.

As Akers' milkman, I was well acquainted with the painting's Siamese cat with the

cerulean eyes. I own a small painting that has this cat's tracks across the back, and I treasure it. On one side of the painting is the cat's footwork in varnish, and on the other side is Akers' handiwork in oil.

In 1937 Akers spent the summer and fall in Switzerland. A good friend from New Jersey named Leslie Vivian enlisted the support of seven other men of means and sponsored the trip. Payment by the artist was to be made in the form of paintings of the famous Swiss scenery.

Akers fulfilled his end of the agreement but was glad when his European stay was over. His inability to speak any of the Swiss languages limited his social activity and he was, at times, very lonely. One of the bright spots of that summer was a visit from a good friend back home, Maud Kammerling, who gave the town of Norway its fine library.

All things considered, however, his vacation was rewarding and many of the large paintings he did while in Switzerland can be described as breathtaking.

Back in Norway, Akers worked hard turning out numerous small landscapes on wood. His early works were mostly on canvas or canvas board. But in 1938 he decided to try painting on wood, selecting a piece of white pine board, measuring 4 x 5 inches and half an inch thick, and painting a Swiss church on it.

The pine wood warped slightly as the paint dried. Displeased with this, he next tried a piece of hard dry wood and found it about perfect.

Thereafter, a great number of V. Akers paintings were on maple or mahogany wood, even some of his larger landscapes. Always experimenting, he also tried masonite and found it a suitable surface for oil paints, and economical as well.

IRONY

the cat
dashed across the road
just before three cars
and a truck went whizzing by
and then
was eaten
by a fox

Dana Lowell

the rusted tractor
with its cracked blade held high, waits
for something to push

Dana Lowell

three cows huddled close
with the stormy side turned out
resist the winter

Dana Lowell

There were periods in the nineteen thirties and forties when Akers became despondent over the progress he had made as a career artist. True, he had won recognition for his fine work, mostly in other states, and scores of his paintings had sold. But he was not happy.

What he really wanted was local acclaim. He wanted his friends and neighbors to realize and admit that Vivian Akers, whom they had always known, *was* a good artist. Some people in Norway and Paris were aware of his talent, and occasionally bought a painting. But there were others, more than a few, who said V. Akers would "never amount to anything," probably because they didn't consider painting to be "work," and because Vivian wasn't working in a mill or a store for weekly wages as they were.

The attitude of these discounters bothered Akers. He cared what his neighbors thought of him. Knowing that some people in town considered him to be a bit of a loafer was disturbing to him. It was a cross he had to bear, but its bearing was made less of a load by his mother. Effie Akers never wavered in her conviction that her son was a great artist, and that the world in general would have to acknowledge him as such. She was like a beacon in the fog for the troubled artist.

Until 1932, most all of Akers' paintings were landscapes. That year, Judge Emery of Sanford was on duty in Oxford County and saw some of Akers' work. Impressed, the judge paid a call and asked him if he had ever tried doing portraits. Akers admitted that he hadn't. Judge Emery urged him to try one, and promised to call again.

That winter Akers painted a portrait of his father, Charles, and one of Harold Thompson, a friend who also painted. When Judge Emery was in the area again, he called at the studio and saw the portraits. He was so impressed that he at once commissioned Vivian to do his portrait.

It was the artist's first portrait commission and he tackled the job with some apprehension. But the finished canvas won the judge's warm approval, and I understand that this portrait of Judge Emery, by V. Akers, hangs today in the York County courthouse in Alfred, Maine.

Other requests for portraits followed, and Akers found himself spending as much time on them as landscapes. Local people and summer visitors brought their children in to

be done in oil. Some brought their mothers, or grandparents, or sat for him themselves.

For a spell, Akers had a chamber in Cambridge, Massachusetts and painted several Harvard professors. He also did portraits of educators at Bates College and Hebron Academy. Later he did Professor Murphy of Columbia University.

Then, in 1957, came his most publicized commission, the one to paint Chief Justice Warren of the U. S. Supreme Court. Akers did his usual good likeness, without being overawed by Justice Warren's sitting for him in Washington, D.C. The portrait now hangs in Occidental College in Los Angeles.

As orders for his paintings increased, Akers did less and less photographic and developing work for the public. In that line he had been in direct competition with Minnie Libby, who ran the Cottage Studio on the next street. But they were rivals in appearance only.

Minnie loved Vivian like a son, and he had the greatest respect for his knickers-wearing peer. As a boy he had often sat in her cozy studio and watched her at work with her camera and subjects. At times he was the subject she photographed. When he became her competitor their fine relationship continued, and more than once the kind-hearted Minnie helped Vivian over some rough spot.

Although he never gave art lessons *per se*, Akers welcomed those who wished to sit and paint with him. He gladly gave them all the help he could, which was often considerable. Five who painted with him at one time or another were George Mealand, Ethel Dana, Emma Morse Brown, Dorothy Record and Donald Bard. All of these became good artists, and the Akers' influence can be seen in their paintings.

Vivian liked company, even if the visitor just sat silently by and watched him work. He loved children, and some who spent many hours in his presence were happily surprised years later when a graduation or wedding present turned out to be a lovely oil painting by V. Akers. The art he gave away over the years is now worth thousands of dollars.

Another skill that Akers possessed was that of wood carving. He made most of the frames for his canvases, ornamenting them with many small, skillful carvings. In the hemlock floor of his studio's largest room, he

Bob Horton

Waterford's Unlikely Scientist-in-Residence

by Cathy Flynn

One of the country's most prominent ballistics experts is hidden away in the Waterford hills.

Expert marksmen and ballistics scientists have traveled 3,000 miles for his advice. Defense lawyers have paid him \$100 an hour for his time.

He is called eccentric, brilliant, crotchety, and famous.

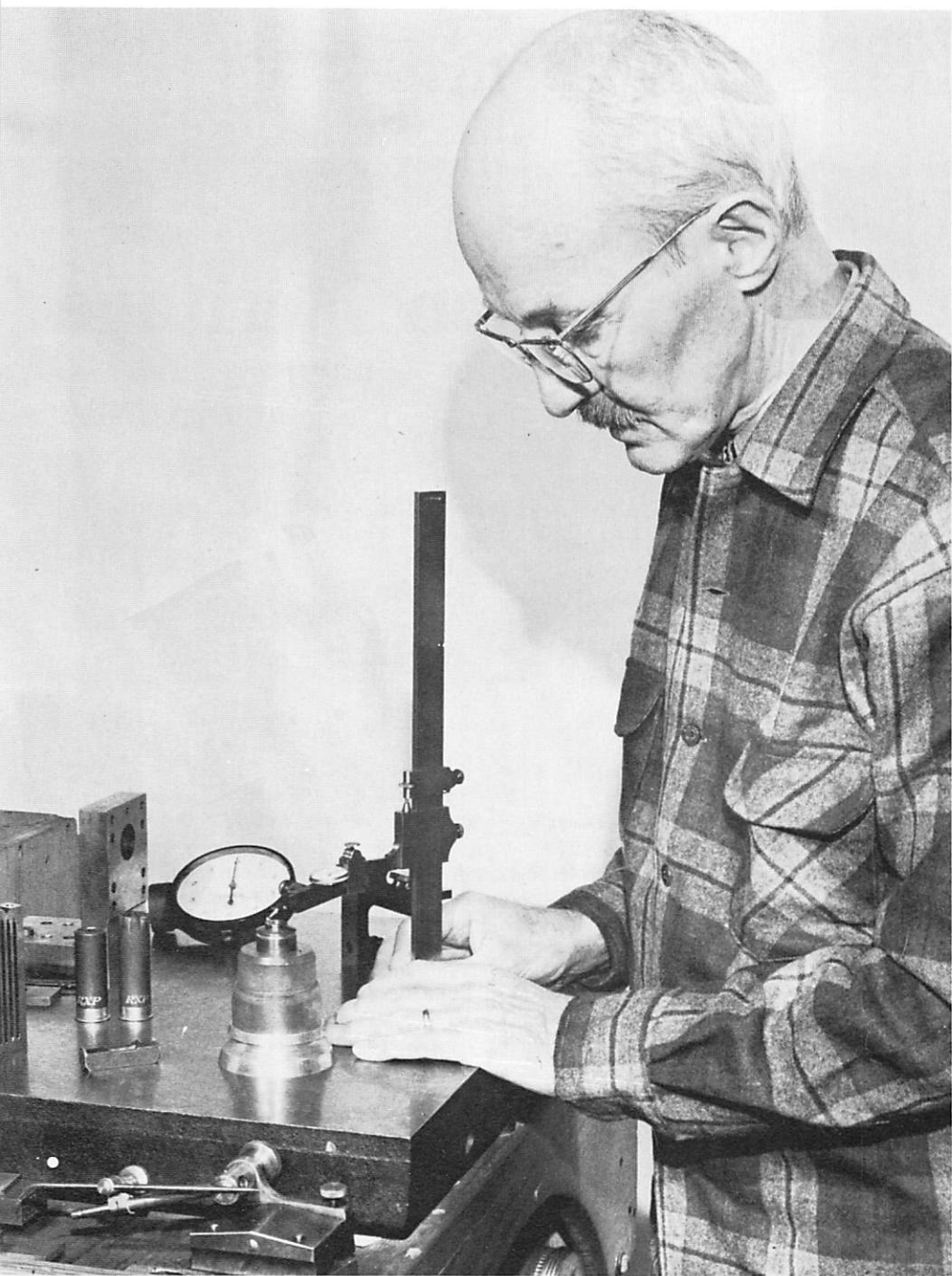
An electronic warning system in his yard and a loaded gun in each room of his living quarters both protect and insulate him in his research laboratory.

Some attribute Clarence E. "Bob" Horton's professional crustiness to the exacting nature of his work, but hunters and gun lovers agree that he is one of the country's leading experts in the science of guns and

ballistics.

Horton's time-worn hands, which now quiver some with age, have, for 76 years, designed and crafted firearms so sensitive and precise that they exist nowhere else in the world except in his small ballistics shop on an isolated road off Route 118 in Waterford.

Since the time when he was four years old and his uncle promised he could play with an unloaded handgun in return for his cooperation in a wedding ceremony, Horton has steadfastly experimented with guns, ammunition and the exact nature of the explosion that fires the weapon.



Bob Horton

Reader's Room

The Sweden Heritage (A Case for Zoning)

by Jerry Genesio

A saga of the tiny town of Sweden, Maine, which took on Central Maine Power Company and won.

The greatest natural resource of Oxford County — its beauty — is being destroyed.

Forests are being carved through and parted to allow the passage of power and pipe lines needed to supply our insatiable demand for energy.

Mountain majesty is being disrobed by unconscionable developers.

Super-highways, encouraging more rather than less energy consumption, are running through hills and dividing valleys in the most perplexing labyrinth ever created by man.

Although most reasonable people agree that controlled development is desirable and that energy and transportation advances are essential, it does not naturally follow that any solution proposed to satisfy these needs is acceptable, at any cost.

Our remaining wilderness areas are not expendable.

Our scenic mountain ranges and panoramic landscapes cannot be replaced.

Those who persist in the struggle against destruction of natural resources become quickly frustrated. Interests are so diversified from one state to the next, indeed, from one town to the next, that solidarity of purpose is virtually impossible.

Thousands of politicians and conservationists are beating at the protected portals of state and federal agencies, each interested in, or feigning an interest in, the preservation or conservation of one or another endangered species or natural resource.

Expecting to be heard above the din and the clatter is tantamount to anticipating a personal audience with the Maker, come judgement day.

There is another way, however, and the town of Sweden, one of Oxford County's smallest rural communities, has discovered it in time and is using it effectively.



The author surveys a section of land clear-cut in Sweden to make way for a power line linking Central Maine to the New England grid system

Perhaps by some quirk of fate, but most likely the result of railroads and highways having passed it by, Sweden did not develop commercially or industrially. It was never caught up in the frenzy that normally surrounds tempestuous progress. The town remained untouched for 110 years, resting calmly in the eye of the storm, an enviable retreat.

Through the decades, many a native son would return to Sweden with tales of new inventions and contrivances witnessed, but their elders were the epitome of Yankee wisdom. They listened in awe. They teased skeptically. Some even went to see for themselves. But always it boiled down to the same cautious conclusion: "We'll wait and see." And wait they did.

Finally, convinced that some of these modern miracles might be worth the trouble and cost of installation, townspeople accepted the introduction of telephones to Sweden around 1910 on the old Farmer's Line.

Several years later, tarring the roads was considered, and about 1937 it was begun.

Then, wonder of wonders, electricity was brought in. That was in 1948 and some say the move was an attempt to appease the boys who were migrating toward the cities following World War II in search of fortune and fame.

It was probably at about this same time that voters began to take a long, hard look at progress. They had carefully selected, one at a time, those products of modern science that offered the most convenience for the least amount of independence lost. But further advances were equated with being up the proverbial creek without an oar. They left no way back. These Sweden folks were not big on burning their bridges.

The people of Sweden have realized that their common denominator is Sweden itself, that one little spot on the map that affirms their existence and raises their voices in a resounding "We are!". Their way is "home rule" in its most literal sense.

With 112 registered voters, Sweden was one of the first country towns in Maine,



Paula
McKenney

The Last of the Woodsmen

by Dana Lowell

"Through gullies, across rocky brooks, and along the crest of a ravine, he followed the tracks... He chose each step with care and passed like a shadow in his dark woolen clothes, hoping to catch the buck off guard."

On the fifth day more snow came and made walking through the woods even harder.

The two small buildings were surrounded by woods and snow covered them and the house roof sagged from the weight. Next to the house was the shed where he skinned his game and hung the pelts to dry. It was crooked and falling apart.

Inside, the air was stagnant and the dim light from a small window barely illuminated the man sitting next to a wood stove wrapping his swollen ankles with dingy pieces of cloth. Snow melted from his wool pants and made a puddle of water on the floor. Slowly, he pulled his wet boots back on and laced them tightly.

The room was motionless. A pair of snowshoes collected dust in the far corner; parts of broken guns and worn out knives cluttered the shelves, and rusted traps hung on the walls. There were no pelts.

Outside, time passed and the snow changed to freezing rain.

He came out of the shed with his scarred-up rifle laid across his forearm and went into the woods. There was an unusual amount of snow for the time of year and it clung to the evergreens, making their branches slouch like tired shoulders.

He picked up on the buck's trail down by the river, and without a sound he made his way through the underbrush. It was getting late and his body was weary and lame from

... the Woodsmen

the endless tracking.

In a small clump of pines he jumped the buck, but he didn't have time to shoot — like so many other times during the last few days, all he saw was a white tail disappearing into the undergrowth.

Through gullies, across rocky brooks and along the crest of a ravine, he followed the tracks. Freezing rain splintered through the trees and wrapped the forest in an icy stillness. He chose each step with care and passed like a shadow in his dark woolen clothes, hoping to catch the buck off guard.

A set of man's tracks in the snow made him pause for a moment, but time was running short and he continued to probe the underbrush.

Finally, he caught the buck standing still; he could just barely make out its image in the tangle of branches. He pulled up and fired. The deer spun madly around and took off through the thickets.

He hurried to where it had been standing; there was no blood in the snow — he had missed.

Leaning up against a giant pine, he let out a long, hard sigh and shook his weary head in disgust. His body ached, but the only thing he could do was to keep tracking the buck. He followed the tracks out of the pine grove and through the hardwoods until they started to swing toward the river.

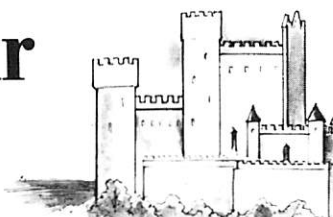
Looking in the direction of the deer's path, he stopped and drew one of his weather-cracked hands across his wrinkled face. The buck was trying to circle back and cross the river.

He broke from the trail. He had to cut the deer off before it got to the river or else it would be gone for another day.

By now the snow had crusted over and it bruised his legs as he hurried awkwardly through the woods. In places, the underbrush was thick and branches crisscrossed one another to form almost impregnable barriers. Icy twigs slapped his face and his ankles throbbed. Still, he quickened his pace.

He was almost to the river, when halfway across a brook, his foot slipped and he

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plunged into the snow-covered rocks. Stunned, he lay there gasping for breath. Freezing rain pelted his face and the water from the brook soaked through to his skin.

He grabbed a low-hanging limb and pulled himself to his feet. Pain burned in his dull blue eyes, but he kept going, hoping that the deer hadn't crossed the river.

He'd made it. Up ahead he could see the buck. In an instant he had his rifle pulled to his shoulder, but the sights were covered with snow. He brushed them clean.

By now the deer was running. He aimed and fired. The buck fell to the ground, only to struggle back to its feet. He fired again but the deer kept going.

Blood stained the snow. The buck didn't cross the river, and he followed the tracks along the bank for a hundred yards and into the woods. He hoped to find the buck lying down before the night set in; but he was exhausted and the deer showed no signs of slowing up.

The blood in the snow grew less and less and soon there was none. His chest was

heavy and his ribs were bruised and he barely had enough strength to walk. He sat down on a rotten tree stump.

The late afternoon light was dim. Ice coated the forest and the gray birches hung low like mourning widows. A stone wall ran through the woods. It was dilapidated and covered with snow. Trees were growing up through it and they had pushed the stones out of place. He stared at the wall.

Ice formed in his hair and snow clung to his pants and his shabby, wet coat began to freeze stiff. Below, the river rushed and there was a mild wind blowing around him which made the weighted trees sway and drove the rain even harder.

He was just regaining some of his strength when he heard footsteps coming towards him. He rose to his feet and could see five men making their way through the woods. They were strangers, and not wanting to be seen by them, he snuck behind a tree and watched them pass. They wore fluorescent

page 55

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... Horton

Because of his years of research, executives of major gun manufacturers and editors of well-known sporting magazines have at one time or another called on Horton at his combination home and office for suggestions in bullet design, cartridge and firing mechanisms and precision testing.

He resents being called a gunsmith, but he is a fine gunsmith. "Pot hunters," — those who hunt to put fresh game on the stove — come to the Horton place to ask him to remove the bugs from newly-purchased huns, to "zero them in," or to mount them with special sights.

Other customers want guns made over, the firing action changed, or the stock (wooden frame of the gun) reshaped.

Though age makes his body tire sooner in the day and his memory fade faster than it used to, those who work with him at "Horton Ballistics" say he is unmistakably a perfectionist in the technology of firearms.

With the ownership of guns so prevalent in the United States that every family possesses an average of three firearms, Horton could have made a lucrative living as a gunsmith — rebuilding, resighting and doing general repair work on pistols and rifles.

But his first love is research. Tables in his lab are crowded with lathes to carve precision gun barrels, cartridge-filling machines and bench model guns.

As a self-proclaimed hermit, Horton has left his house only twice during the past year — once to visit an ailing friend and once for a flu shot. The mailman even delivers his mail directly to the door.

He sits comfortably in a small room off his research lab, where a card table serves as a temporary desk until his wife comes home from teaching school. Then he'll put the table away to give Mrs. Horton room to work. A small kitchen and a bedroom have been the couple's home for 30 years.

The man others call "crusty" is, nonetheless, a gracious host. He gazes out at his isolated 30 acres, stretched out in the shadow of Page Mountain, as he reminisces about his boyhood:

"The first gun I ever owned was stolen. I traded a pair of double-runner ice skates for a .38 calibre revolver when I was seven years old. My friend had taken it from a drawer where his lawyer-father kept weapons

confiscated during criminal arrests.

"My youth was adventurous, not malicious like today," he says, tongue-in-cheek.

It was lucky circumstances that first fueled Horton's childhood interest in guns. An employee of the Winchester Arms Company happened to share a building with Horton's family in New Haven, Connecticut, where he grew up. As soon as he was old enough to pick a lock, Horton used to sneak into the neighbor's quarters and faithfully disassemble and clean an extensive gun collection.

It was his father, however, whom Horton credits for feeding the boy's craving for science.

"I was born with a knack for using my hands," Horton says. "When I was eight, the chief pattern maker in my father's boiler-manufacturing company taught me woodworking. By the time I was nine I could operate lathes, millers and grinders in the tool room. I had the run of the whole place so I also learned the intricacies of heat-treating metals in the blacksmith's shop. It was wonderful training and I had the aptitude for it."

Even at the tender age of eight, Horton knew he wanted to apply his knowledge to the designing of guns.

He laughs modestly at the suggestion he write a novel about his life.

Throughout his boyhood, Horton came to Maine regularly to spend summers at a boys' camp in East Otisfield. It was there that a friend would talk often to Horton about a local girl who was eventually to become Horton's wife.

As a teenager, he came back frequently "just to bum around."

"In high school, all I was interested in was athletics and fraternities," recalls Horton. "I played half-back on the New Haven high school football team, but I was two inches taller then."

"You'll starve; you can't earn a living that way," my dad told me in one of those all night sessions. I told him I wanted to go to Wyoming to work on a cow ranch.

"I promised him never to call home for money and he promised to pay for my college education when I returned."

"Cowboying was adventurous," he says, eyeing a set of riding spurs and a well-worn



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... Horton

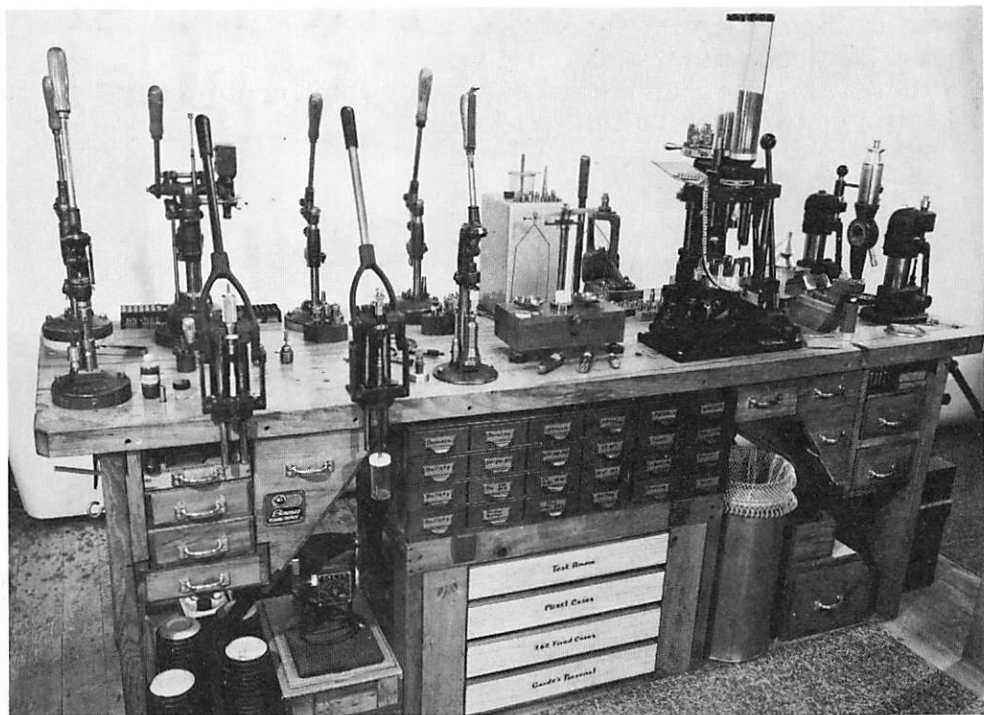
rope which hang on the door beside us. "I was expected to act like a man.

"Well I worked a year at a ranch in the foothills of the Big Horn Mountains in north

arms.

I ask him why he is known as "Bob."

"A friend and I got caught hopping trains. The police had cornered us in the caboose because the train was going too fast for us to jump off. We offered the policeman cigars



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central Wyoming. You should have seen me in my riding boots and my Stetson hat, walking the streets for five or six days. At the end of that year I had only 36 cents left, was 3,000 miles from home and had vowed not to call for money.

"I gave the 36 cents to a blind man and decided that I would pawn two revolvers that I had in my suitcase, skip the hotel bill — which wasn't honest but I needed the money more than the hotel did — and hop freight trains to Arizona.

"But when I went back to the hotel to get my things, I ran into an old friend of my father's who offered me a job in his film laboratory."

Horton stops to answer the telephone. It is a "gun daughter" calling, one of the many local people whom Horton has befriended because of a mutual appreciation for fire-

but he wanted our names. I said the first thing that came into my head — 'Bob Franklin.' I've been called Bob ever since."

Horton left the West and returned to New Haven to finish his education under private Ivy League tutors — at his father's expense, as had been promised.

His first job after schooling was at Winchester Arms where he worked sighting guns and making gun barrels. He also served in the company's ballistics laboratory, learning the characteristics of gun cartridges, what happens when a gun is fired and the motion of bullets in flight.

As a gun consultant in the 1930's, he worked with all the major arms businesses. During the Second World War he served as a United States gun and ballistics engineer.

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... Akers

cut a maze of intricate designs, and in his display room he affixed to the ceiling the twelve signs of the zodiac he had carved in large wooden panels.

For his bedroom he cut countless six-inch hexagonal panels of pine and attached each panel to the ceiling with six screws, countersunk and plugged by wooden pegs. These hexagonal pieces now adorn the ceiling and the east wall of the entry of the Western Maine Art Center on Norway's Main Street, thanks to the timely efforts of some members of the club when they learned that these panels were available to the public.

V. Akers loved the state of Maine, and the majority of his landscapes are of Maine scenes. This state's lakes, mountains, rivers and trees never failed to appeal to his artistic sense.

Lake Pennesseewassee and Bird Brook were two of his favorite subjects and he painted them again and again, in sizes varying from tiny wooden panels to huge canvases.

A stately pine tree in Turner often

appeared in his works.

Other scenic spots he liked to visit and paint were in Newry, Albany, Stow, Bethel and the Moosehead Lake region, to name only a few.

In studying these oil landscapes one has to be impressed not only by their beauty but by the amount of work that clearly went into each one. Akers never "dashed off" a painting. He always took time to do each scene exactly as he felt it should be done. Hundreds of tiny strokes of different colors painstakingly applied in exactly the right places blend together in the eye of the beholder to form a complete and enjoyable picture.

These paintings are very realistic, and are imbued with a warmth that could come only from an artist who really loved his subject. It is more than technique. It is profound feeling, and heart.

Akers studied the works of many artists of different schools with different methods, and was to some degree influenced by them. He liked the bright paintings of the impressionists, as those of the French artists Pissarro, Monet and Renoir, and those of the American artists J. J. Enneking, Willard Metcalf and Childe Hassam. He also admired the art of Frederick Waugh.

Maxfield Parrish and his vivid paintings really caught Akers' fancy. He knew Parrish personally and once spent two days with him at the home of the great colorist in Cornish, N.H. One thing these two artists had in common was a passion for the color blue and its many hues.

I should mention here an additional honor that came to Vivian Akers. In 1952 Colby College, a very art-conscious institution, awarded an honorary degree to the artist for excellence in portraiture. It was like the topping on his cake of success.

Vivian Akers is no longer with us, passing on in 1966 at the age of seventy-nine. But I feel that the town of Norway and the State of Maine can justly be proud of their native son artist. He left all of us a precious heritage in many hundreds of landscapes and portraits of high artistic quality.

During his lifetime thousands of people from all walks of life entered the doors of Akers' studios, and the lives of most of them were enriched by meeting this generous, talented man of many interests and skills. Few ever forgot him.

If you own an Akers painting, you are

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fortunate. If you don't have one and would like to see one, there are two places in Norway where his works can be observed.

In the Stephens Memorial Hospital, an autumn landscape by Akers hangs in the waiting room of the intensive care unit. The scene is laid in the Bethel area and it is one of the finest impressionistic paintings Akers ever produced. It was donated to the hospital by Philip Morrill of West Paris.

Upstairs in the Norway Library another painting by V. Akers can be seen. It is a portrait of Minnie Libby, Akers' friend and benefactor. Minnie appears about to speak to the observer from the canvas, so faithfully did the artist capture her likeness and her unique but pleasing personality. It is one of Akers' best portraits and it does honor to both of these talented people of Norway's past.

Effie Akers was right. Her son did possess what it takes to be a great artist. Although art experts of the future may never place the name of Vivian Milner Akers in the same bracket with Winslow Homer and Andrew Wyeth, I am convinced that a goodly measure of fame will accrue to the Akers name. Many people, including several

antique dealers, are continually seeking to buy any paintings by V. Akers that become available. And the prices they are willing to pay would surprise even the faithful Effie.

Some of these prices still aren't beyond the means of the average frugal citizen, but they are certain to spiral upward as time goes on. The demand for Akers' work is growing each year as more and more people see it for the first time.

Those of us who knew Vivian Akers personally will always treasure our memories of him. He was warm, outgoing and earthy, and treated everyone as a friend and equal. Conceit and vanity were not in him. His art was distinctly his own. No one ever painted just like he did and no one ever will.

One of the artists who painted with him during the nineteen fifties declared recently that, in his opinion, Vivian Akers should even now be classed among the old masters.

I agree with him.

Walker, a retired dairyman, is an art and antique collector.



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... Horton

When he turned 44, the once-divorced Horton married 29-year-old Eugenia Swanton of Otisfield, whom he says he had decided to marry even before they met.

"She came to New Haven to meet me because we had heard a lot about each other at camp," he says. "When she left two days later we were engaged."

Because his new wife had a steady teaching job in the area and a friend had found property for the couple in Waterford, Bob Horton moved to Maine.

"They told us the land had $3\frac{1}{4}$ miles on the Crooked River and was isolated," he says. "We could shoot here and not bother anyone."

"There we were. I had never been in business for myself. We had borrowed \$6,000 from the bank, had less than \$100 between us, no running water and no refrigerator. Things looked impossible on paper."

He blinks back tears as he recalls an ailing friend who once bailed him and his wife out of their financial difficulties.

"I have been called a robber," he continues, "because I charged \$3 an hour for gunsmithing when we first set up shop here 30 years ago."

"The most I ever netted in my business is \$2,000 a year. But when I get through I have that money in my pocket. Many men make \$20,000 a year and still have to borrow money."

"We never bought a single thing we couldn't pay cash for and I give my wife \$1,000 every Christmas."

"You can see," he says, motioning toward the door, "we don't have a shop at the end of a house. We have an apartment at one end of a shop."

He rubs the head of "Punkin," his blonde Cocker Spaniel, a breed so named because it was originally raised to hunt woodcock.

He looks tired as he talks and I ask him if he's had enough.

"I'm just a hermit," he says. "I get nervous with people. I once went into the city of Lewiston with my wife and I had to ask her to take me home. The traffic light wouldn't

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turn and wouldn't turn and I had to come home. I had to be back in my haven.

"I have finally come to realize I am an old man." He quotes a line from Shakespeare about the inevitability of death.

Although Horton is in good health, he says that twice in his life he became seriously ill because of the careless use of chemicals such as benzene and carbon tetrachloride, which give off deadly fumes.

Even smart scientists kill themselves with chemicals, he explains.

"A man I know who had a doctorate in chemistry died from the fumes emitted from a small amount of mercury spilled on the floor."

Because many of his old gun customers have died or are too old to shoot anymore, and because he is so particular about whom he takes on as customers, much of Horton's bread-and-butter business these days involves the rebuilding of 100 or so rifles that are used every summer at a nearby boys' camp.

Horton strolls through the gun lab where

the work takes place and proudly points out some rifles given him by friends. One is valued at \$3,000. To discourage thievery, Horton locks all of his personal rifles and stocks only those pieces of firearms he is currently studying, avoiding any completely assembled new or used guns.

"There is equipment in this lab that you won't find anywhere else on earth," he says of the gun cartridges, pressure guns and gauges that he has built himself in order to test his firing theories. One instrument is even able to check the hardness of steel.

It is obvious that Horton's life was meant to be lived in a place like Waterford. He needs to be alone and the town allows that privacy. When he was younger, his land offered him acres of open space on which to snowshoe and ski. Now that he is 76, it offers him a place to work in peace.

"Nobody pushes me here," he says.



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HOMECOMING

Up the hill she slips toward the
cottage frosted thick with snow
and icicles
running
down
its
sides.

Smoke, like steam from a kettle, curls upward
from its bubbling innards,
winding its way through slanted sheets of flakes.

Boot toes kicking against the wooden steps,
she tosses snow from fur-framed cheeks and eyes,
slicing her way through the stuck, pulled-open door
into the flame-warm house where a black satin cat runs to greet her,
tail held high in salute,

And a white bear rug of a dog lifts a lazy fringe of lashes
in her direction.

Children with candy faces flutter toward her like winter roses,
rushing to fold her in,

And willingly,

Into the warm and yeasty heart-glow she dissolves
cell by cell,
part of the batter now,
sinking softly, down-like,
into the golden, buttery aura;

The sweet taste of love and honeyed dreams on her mouth.

Pat White Gorrie



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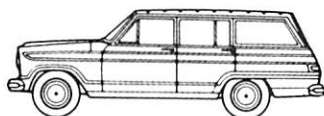
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...Reader's Room

perhaps the very first of its size, to appoint a Planning Board and to write a comprehensive plan in an effort to preserve the town's pastoral characteristics.

Words of foreboding in the plan, and their intent, are clear and concise:

The irreplaceable natural resources of Sweden must be protected from the type of development which would destroy them.

Improper development can destroy the aesthetic beauty of our ponds — a quality which can never be replaced.

Unabashed and prideful statements abound throughout:

The town's greatest resource is its natural beauty. Sweden is still an unspoiled community.

One of the plan's major recommendations was implementation of a strong, all-encompassing zoning ordinance written to protect the natural resources of the town from adverse development.

Sweden's first zoning ordinance was adopted by townspeople at town meeting in March of 1970. The ordinance is truly unique in that it establishes no zones for commercial or industrial development. Such ventures require a conditional-use permit which may be issued by the planning board only if very stringent provisos can be met. All such applications require a public hearing.

It was not long before Sweden's foresight and providence paid handsome dividends.

In 1971 Central Maine Power Company transmission experts began plotting the course for a 115 kilovolt power line originating at generating facilities in central Maine and terminating at the New Hampshire state line. There, it would tie into the New England power grid system.

Unfortunately, Sweden was lying in the path of expedience.

It was early spring of 1975 when townspeople first discovered gaping swaths emerging from the deep forests to leap-frog narrow country roads along the power line's charted course. Residents, jamming on their brakes, skidded over still-icy roads and stared in disbelief. Their initial state of speechless shock grew almost instantly into frenzied belligerence.

After several frantic days of telephoning and emergency kaffee-katches, however, everyone arrived at the same basic deduction: "They can't do this!". Furthermore, as has been demonstrated

time and time again over the last two centuries, these people were prepared to prove it.

The Sweden ordinance was tested and, in time, it prevailed.

The power company, having failed to obtain a construction permit required by the ordinance *prior* to the clearing of land, was stopped. The media compared the situation to the Biblical confrontation between David and Goliath. However, the 20th century version differed from the original in that the giant did not fall upon his face to the earth, preferring instead to negotiate.

The people of Sweden are stern, but they are reasonable.

The power line was allowed to go ahead through but the areas clear-cut had to be replanted and allowed to re-generate in a fashion technically referred to as "feathering."

The road crossings were elaborately screened; brooks and streams were cleared of debris; erosion control programs were implemented.

Pole height was restricted and no structures of any kind were allowed in areas deemed by town boards to be critical. One such area, a Natural Resource Protection Zone over 250' wide, was spanned entirely.

At four road crossings in Sweden, CMP planted screens with trees ranging in size from 3 to 18 feet tall. The varieties included White and Norway Pines, Northern White Cedar and Canadian Hemlock, and totaled 670 in number. As an added, unexpected bonus, CMP volunteered to place 30 additional Norway Pine on a crossing in Lovell, and 188 additional White Pine at two road crossings over Route 5 in Fryeburg. Both towns are contiguous to Sweden.

A seeding and mulching plan for erosion and sediment control was implemented, calling for 1527 lbs. lime, 900 lbs. 10-10-10 fertilizer, 73.5 lbs. grass seed and 1527 lbs. mulch, as well as 252 Virginia or Rugosa rose plants and 275 Red Japanese Bayberry plants.

A shrub and tree replanting program encompassed the entire seven mile clear-cut right of way. This mammoth undertaking called for planting 8000 White Pine and 7000 Balsam Fir, a total of 15,000 trees averaging 3 feet in height; 760 Redosier Dogwood and 600 American Cranberry bushes, a total of 1360 shrubs from 1½ to 3 feet in height; 16,360 Agriform Forest Starter Tablets, and

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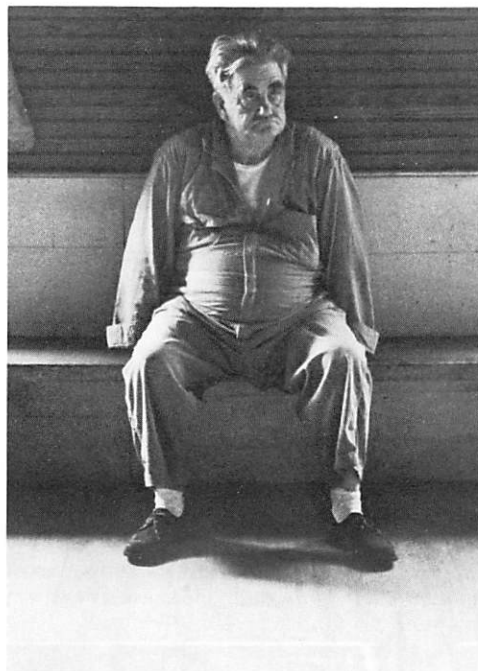
sawdust or hay mulch as required.

In addition, CMP furnished Sweden officials with a performance bond in an amount equal to 125% of the total screening, seeding and planting contract containing a call date of October 30, 1976.

Not much more could have been expected.

Being involved in these decisions, taking part in the drafting and implementation of laws, and demanding respect for them — that's "home rule."

Ian McHarg, Chairman of the Department of Landscape Architecture and Regional Planning at the University of Pennsylvania, addressing the Maine Association of Conservation Commissions in October of 1975, asserted that states have a basic right to protect their resources of land, water, air and forests from destructive exploitation. He emphasized that municipal ordinances prohibiting practices that damage basic resources are desperately needed.



Retired electrician Bill Gray, affectionately known to Sweden residents as "The Great White Hunter," helped muster state support against CMP line construction methods through letters to Maine's Commissioner of Fish and Game complaining of trout brooks damaged by the company's construction procedures.

Sweden residents are extremely grateful today that their forebears recognized the worth of McHarg's message. Colonel Sam Nevers and Jacob Stevens, Sweden's earliest settlers, would have, no doubt, been equally pleased with their followers.

Quoting from the memoirs of his father, the Colonel, William Nevers wrote in 1858:

These settlers were a hardy race of men, and no doubt to their labor and example, the present prosperity of the descendants is due. They sought no luxury beyond that of a quiet home; no pride beyond the respectability, the integrity and the morality of the deserving citizen; no ambition to grasp the fortune of any other than the laborer; and no aristocracy beyond that of blood.

The soil was good; the climate healthy. 'Twas a rugged surface-like all upland but productive, and so well was it timbered that though for sixty six years the ax has plied the forests, all along the streams and hillsides still exist important evidence of nature's wealth.

It is very aptly phrased in Sweden's comprehensive plan:

The town enjoys all the advantages of clean air, clean water, scenic views and miles of open, undeveloped countryside. These attributes make the town a pleasant, attractive place to live. The purpose of this plan is to determine what must be done to assure that these attributes will be available to future generations of Sweden residents.

Such attributes are a most important part of the Sweden heritage.

Genesio, secretary of the Sweden Planning Board, served as chairman of the appeals board during the town's power line negotiations with Central Maine Power Company.



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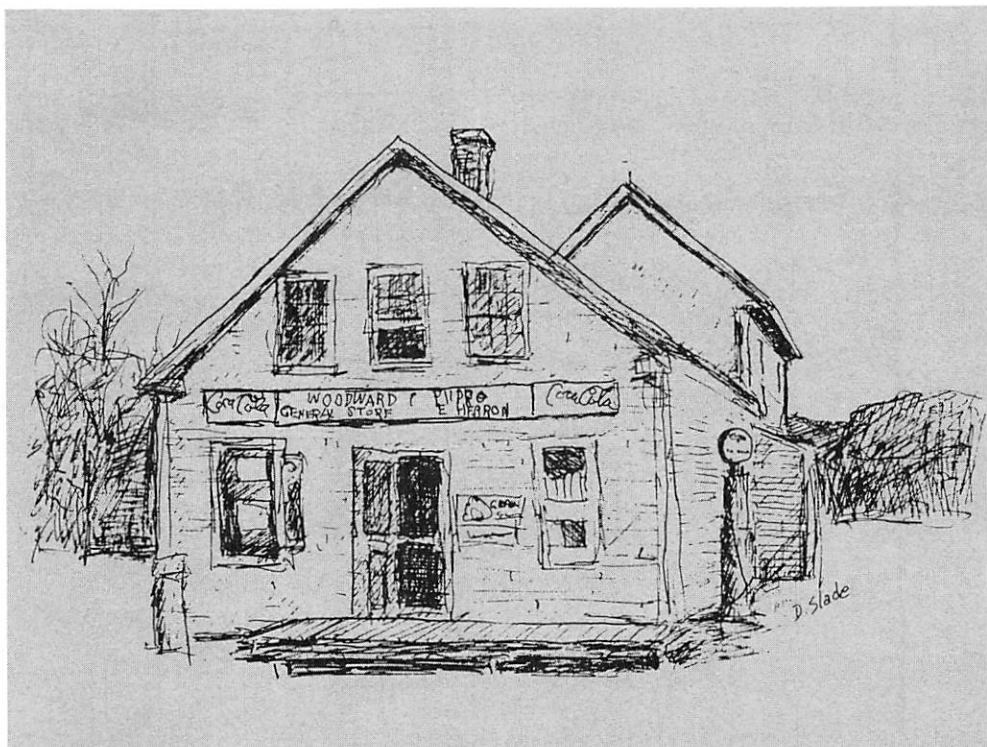
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... Notes

Mother would not go down cellar alone. Neither Violet nor I would stay alone in the house. Grandpa just scoffed at it and said it was nothing but a "Boo Fly."

"Not knowing what a boo fly was only frightened us more.

"At times the noise was so loud it could be heard all over the house. Dad searched the cellar and under the floors but never found anything. One day even Grandpa got tired of listening to it and announced he was going to prove it was just a noise and he was going to put a stop to it.

"We all watched as he armed himself with a huge club and went on his big hunt. After some time he came back with the news that there certainly was nothing there.

"In the meantime we got used to the knocking and went on our happy way ignoring our ghost completely.

"Then one day we found out why — if there are ghosts — our home had reason to have one.

"We heard the story that all the old-time settlers knew, about a married woman living in the north end of town who had been having an affair with another man. One night her husband put an end to it all in a hurry. He shot his wife and then, to be on the safe side, he beat her face with an old-fashioned flat iron. It was a bloody affair and blood was spattered over the kitchen door.

"The man was sentenced to life in prison. In time, the house fell in and my grandfather bought the bloody door. The door was passed on to my father, who hung it as an inside cellar door.

"The strange thing was that nothing could ever remove the blood stains from the wood.

"As time went on, we became accustomed to the strange noise and after several years it stopped entirely. When the house was torn down, nothing was ever found that could have caused it.

"What was it? Where did it go? Did the ghost of a murdered man follow the door? Did it give up and go away when a family ignored it? Did a happy family help to remove the sin of murder?

"There never will be an answer. The house and nearly all the people who lived there are gone now. We can only hope that if there are really ghosts, that this one has found peace in another happy place."



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Goings On

ART

MARC JALBERT, painting & drawing; GARY AMBROSE, wood sculpture, at Hebron Academy's Hupper Gallery, Jan. 8-Feb. 4, sponsored by Phoenix and the Maine State Commission on the Arts & Humanities. Gallery hours: weekdays 9-5, Sundays 2-5.

STUDENT EXHIBIT, Hebron Academy's Hupper Gallery, Feb. 5-April 8.

EADWEARD MUYBRIDGE (inventor of the motion picture) at the Bates College

Treat Gallery, Jan. 4-Feb. 3 An exhibition circulated by the International Museum of Photography at George Eastman House, Gallery hours, weekdays 1-4:30.

MUSIC

RICHARD ROBERTS on piano, at Bates College Chapel, Weds., Feb. 15, 8 p.m. A Mozart Sonata, the Schumann Fantasie Opus 17, and Stravinsky's piano setting of scenes from his *Petrouchka*, "played by a thoughtful artist." Free admission.

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MOSCOW CHORALE, at the Lewiston Junior High School Auditorium, Thurs., Feb. 23 at 8:15 p.m., sponsored by the Community Concert Series.

CANDLELIGHT CHORALIERS, presenting Gabriel Faure's *Requiem*, Sun. Mar. 19, 7:30 p.m., South Paris Congregational Church, under the direction of Evelyn Young.

THE FRANKLIN STREET ARTERIAL, jazz and jazz-rock, Feb. 25, 8 p.m., Sargent Gymnasium on the Hebron Academy campus. Tickets available at the door. Sponsored by Phoenix in cooperation with the Maine State Commission on the Arts & Humanities.

LECTURES

GOULD ACADEMY OUTING CLUB LECTURE SERIES presents Rick Wilcox on "Alaskan Expeditions on Mt. Logan & Mt. Bonna," Thurs., Feb. 9, Rm. 104 of Hanscom Hall; Peter Randall on "The Isles of Shoals & Their Birds," Thurs., Feb. 16, Rm. 104, Hanscom Hall.

WORKSHOPS

ASSERTIVENESS TRAINING, eight-week course offering instruction and practice in being more assertive in work, family, social and interpersonal situations; and examination of reasons for problems in assertiveness, sponsored by the Tri-County Counseling Center, Monday mornings, Feb. 2-April 17, tuition \$5.00. For information and/or enrollment, tel. 743-6725 or 743-6465.

SPECIAL THIS MONTH

BRIDGTON'S 1978 WINTER CARNIVAL, Feb. 17-Feb. 19, with a Variety Show, sponsored by the Lakes Area Community Theatre, on Fri., Feb. 17 at the Lakes Region High School; sports activities all weekend and a public supper Sat. night.

SHAKER ARTS & CRAFTS, an exploration of basic skills of spinning, natural dyeing and herb growing, under the direction of Theodore Elliot Johnson, sponsored by the University of Maine Continuing Education Division, Feb. 8-Mar. 29, 7-9 p.m., Shaker Community, Sabbathday Lake, Poland Spring, tuition \$45.00.



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Ayah

We consider your comments and suggestions an important means of discovering our readers' interests. Representative and appropriate letters will be published as space allows. Most likely answers won't be necessary, and probably the only response you'll receive will be a most appropriate "Ayah!"

To The Editor:

When my neighbor, Cathy Flynn told me that we have a local magazine all our own, I was really thrilled.

And to have the editor and one of the contributors here in Buckfield, too!

I found the magazine no let-down but tremendously interesting. I especially enjoy finding out about some of the businesses and people in the area that I just wouldn't discover, otherwise.

This, after being away for twenty years, is a good way to get in touch with old & new.

Laura DeCoster
Buckfield



You Don't Say

A local man, who shaved his beard after many years of hirsute splendor, found himself unrecognized by his friends. Approaching an elderly acquaintance in a parking lot one day, he began his conversation, "You probably don't recognize me..."

Whereupon the old gentleman leaned out of his truck and observed in all seriousness, "Nope, I didn't recognize ya at all without yer beard."

C.H.



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RECOLLECTIONS

SIX WEEKS SLEDDING IN MARCH

(1903 — West Fryeburg, Maine) Perhaps it is due to the unusual depth of the snow in northern New England the passing winter, that the heading of this paragraph has been heard in speech and read in print more frequently than in previous years.

From inquiries made with a view to ascertain the origin of the quotation it appears that all who use it are not familiar with the facts in the case and thus lose the play upon words that the phrase contains.

Many years ago, before the incorporation of the county of Oxford in 1907, Parsonfield, in the neighboring county of York, was already settled and incorporated a town.

Among the early settlers were several bearing the name of Weeks and a little later giving to a village of the town the name "Weeks Corner," which it still retains. Here on the last day of March far away and behind the 20th century, were observed six of these Weeks men hurrying their oxen and sleds to make the most of the departing opportunity for this mode of conveyance.

So once upon a time, it is a fact, "there were (was?) 6 Weeks Sledding in March."

Numerous descendants of the Parsonfield families of Weeks are to be found in Portland, Fryeburg and other towns of Maine and in the town of Chatham, and elsewhere in New Hampshire. One has a seat in the present legislature of New Hampshire, where his grandfather of the same name served as a representative from the same town of Chatham.

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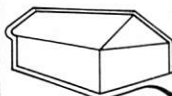
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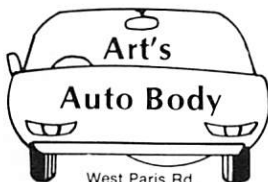
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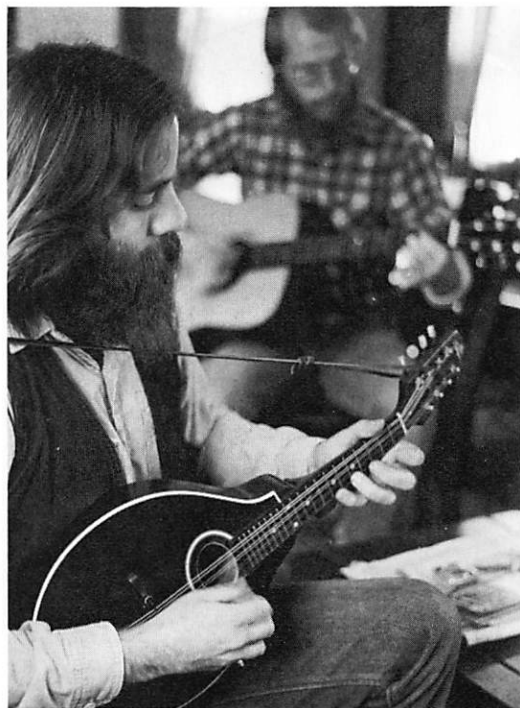
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Alan Ash

Alan Ash sits in his warm brown trailer, his fingers flying over his mandolin strings as sweetly rushing as a mountain stream after spring thaw. His dark and bushy beard glints luxuriously in the morning sunlight. He flashes a grin that is simultaneously little-boy shy and openly friendly, and launches into the words of "Goin' Down The Road Feelin' Bad," while his partner, Tim Helms, fills in on his hand-made guitar.

It

It's a fine way to start a winter's day... white hills outside, bluegrass inside.

Alan, 25, wended his way to Buckfield from Union, New Jersey by way of California and West Virginia. It was in the beautiful hilly country of "West Virginny" that he got into organic farming, raising bees and living off the land, absorbing the tempo and mood of the mountain music along with the fresh air; building up muscle until he grew into a bear of a man and at the same time developing admirable finger dexterity and nimbleness as a result of picking up an instrument whenever he sat down to relax.

When he isn't playing his "un-banjo," the mandolin, for his own amusement, he is giving lessons in it. You might also catch him performing at local niteries or restaurants anywhere in the Oxford Hills area or as far afield as Portland.

But the dream that brought Alan here, as well as his friend Tim, an Illinois native who arrived close on his heels, was that of opening a crafts studio where the two would turn out hand-made custom-designed guitars, using "... the finest wood from all over the world: spruce, ebony, rosewood, walnut..." and also rebuild and repair used musical instruments.

This they have begun to do, in a converted dog kennel on Buck Hill Road. It was a stroke of luck finding the trailer for rent and, on the same property, the outbuildings Alan was looking for. But it took awhile to get lucky.

"It got mighty cold sleeping in my Datsun those first weeks I was here. When the nights got down to 20° I began to wonder if I'd wake up some mornin' and find myself 'froze' to death. That's when I put an ad in the paper and said right out I needed lodgings 'cause I was livin' out of my truck."

Even when Alan woke up stiff, cramped and "near froze to death," he didn't question his Maine move.

"I've got a lot of faith," he says, with a smile that warms you like an applewood fire from a pot-bellied stove.



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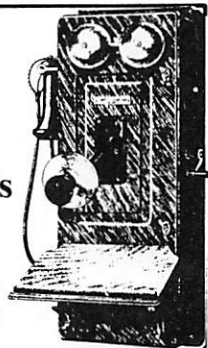
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Can You Place It?



Last month's brass door handle opens the way to the Sunri Ski Shop in downtown Bethel.

Homemade

Cornmeal, once a staple item in the American diet, has all but disappeared from modern-day menus.

The substance, which is still stocked on most grocers' shelves, has a coarse, gritty texture which many people find hard to stomach, according to Louise Huff, a former high school home economics teacher.

"But, growing up on the farm there was

always plenty of cornmeal around and we liked it because we *had* to," says Mrs. Huff.

A traditional family recipe for **Custard Corn Bread** which dates back to her grandmother's day, remains a Huff family favorite.

The corn cake, sometimes called spider corn cake, is prepared in an eight or nine inch iron fry pan, once known as a "spider."

"That's part of the tradition of it," explains Mrs. Huff, who plans to try the dish out on members of her quilting class when the group next meets in Norway.

Combined with pea or bean soup or potato chowder, and some cookies and fruit, the bread makes a hearty hot meal, right for this time of year, says Mrs. Huff.

Ingredients:

- 1 2/3 cups cornmeal (yellow)
- 2 eggs
- ¼ cup sugar
- 1/3 cup flour
- ½ tsp. salt
- heaping tsp. soda, dissolved in
- 1 cup sour milk or buttermilk
(to make sour milk, add 1 tsp. vinegar to a cup of milk)

Place fry pan on the stove, add small amount of butter and heat until it sizzles. Mix all ingredients except the milk. Beat and turn mixture into the fry pan. Then slowly add the milk, making sure *not to stir*. Bake in 350 degree oven for about 40 minutes.

The bread, which will be crusty on the outside and soft and custard-like in the middle, should be cut in pie-shaped wedges and served either plain or with butter. It is eaten with a fork.



Louise Huff



743-6923
or
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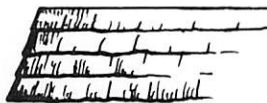
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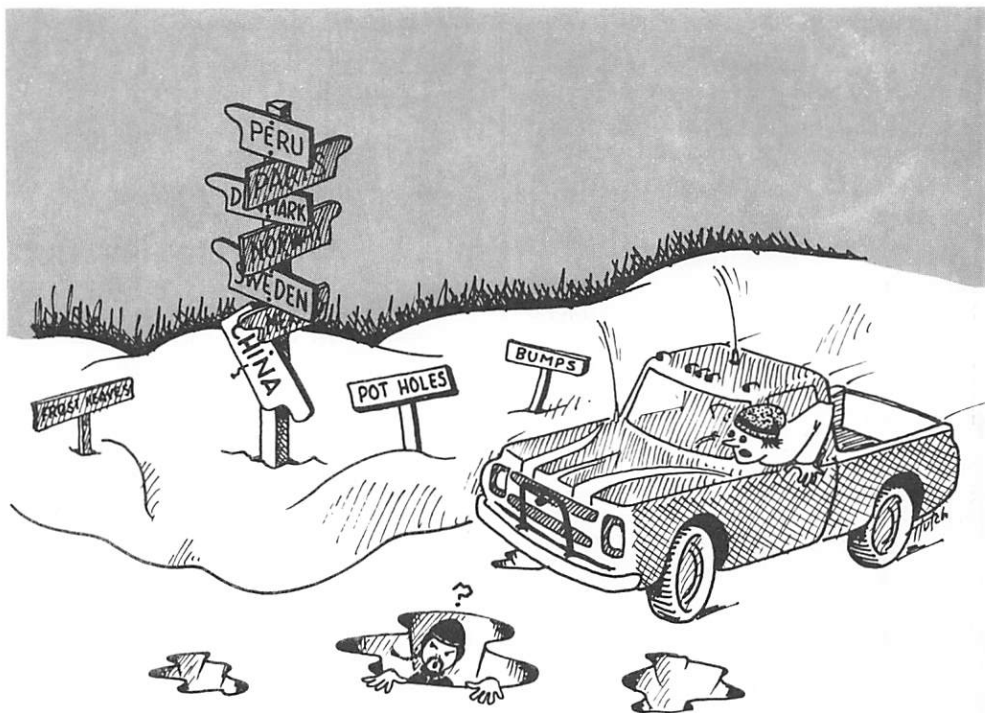
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... the Woodsmen

orange rain coats, pants and hats and carried their high-powered rifles lazily at their sides.

He didn't move — he couldn't move; he could only peer at the five men walking leisurely past him. The rain fell and they were gone as unexpectedly as they had come. He moved out from behind the tree and gazed blankly in the direction that they had gone.

His face was long and weary and his eyes were hollow. He stood alone. Soon the day would be over. His last chance was to catch the buck when it returned to a grove of hemlocks as it had on all the other stormy nights.

The rain fell. His tracks weaved through the woods and then stopped by the side of a clearing as though he had come to the edge of a cliff. There he stood like a memorial with his rifle leaning against his side.

He waited with dusk rapidly closing in. Across one of his cheeks there was a long deep scar, and his hard facial features looked like weather-beaten rocks. His breath came out in white puffs and dissolved into the cold.

An hour passed and still no sound. At least not the sound of a deer picking through the underbrush, stopping and smelling the air and then continuing on its way. The air grew even colder; his hands and feet began to tingle. Ghost-like shadows laid across the snow and the forest grew mysteriously quiet.

As dusk was turning into darkness, the silence was broken by the sound of a deer's hooves crunching through the crusted snow. He waited. Then, there in the clearing, the buck materialized from the dreary light.

He brought the deer into his sights. But it was not running — it could only limp; and its huge antlers were scarred and broken, and its muzzle was caked with frost.

He lowered his gun. He was tired, and the buck was not running — it was tired. Exhaustion was obvious. Night was closing in on them.

He sat back against a tree and laid his rifle at his side. The rain fell and his hands and his feet turned numb as the buck disappeared into the darkness.

Lowell works at his family's saw mill in Buckfield.



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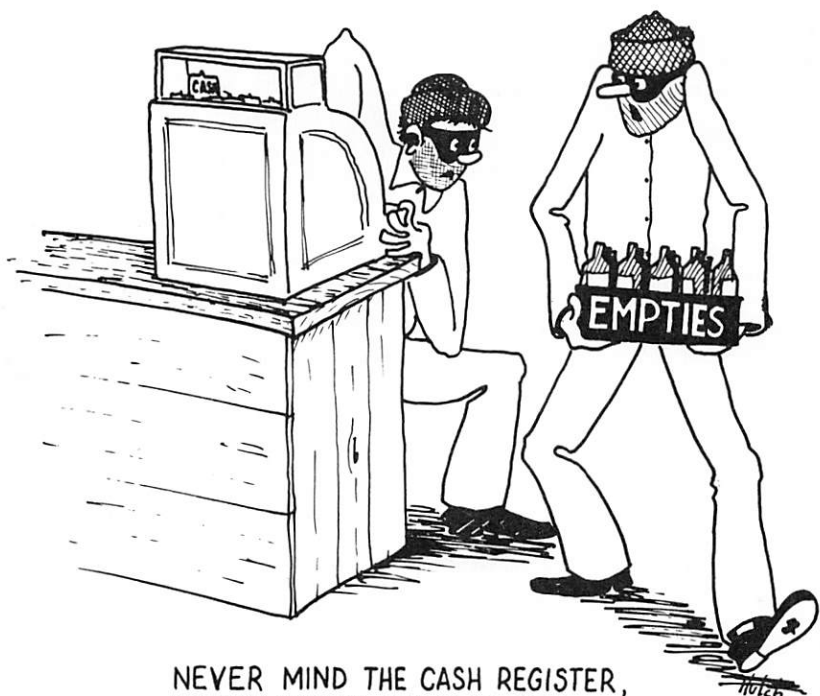


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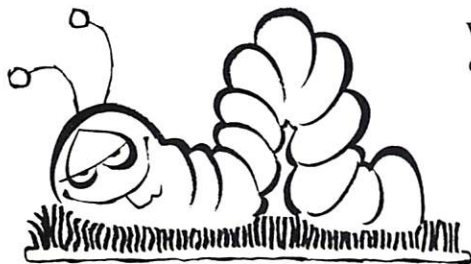
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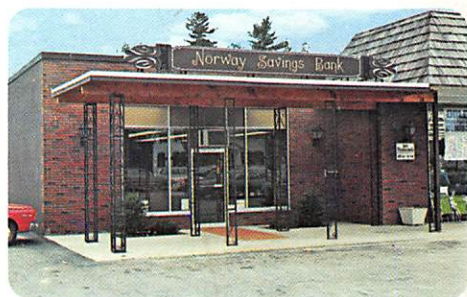
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